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The Portico

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## JAMES MONTFORD: ARTIST DOLLARS PROJECT

Since February 1993, African-American artist James Montford of Norwich, Connecticut, has been sending dollar bills to the Taft Museum.

Each day, a dollar has arrived with the name of an artist of color inscribed on the bill.

Organized to commemorate Black History Month as a special project of the Robert Scott Duncanson Society, the resulting installation of 365 dollars will be on display in the Education Room of the Taft Museum, February 4-28. Biographical information about the artists on the dollars will be the primary content of the exhibition. A reading area will be available to visitors who wish to acquaint themselves with the work of these artists.

Montford's strategy of associat-

ing the names of underexposed artists with a recognized monetary value raises the issue of the limited access to patronage, museums, and galleries that is a reality for these artists.

Working from a sociopolitical aesthetic that has its roots in the indignation of Africans and African-Americans who were subjected to the middle passage, segregation, and the Jim Crow laws, Montford pursues a humanistic ideology that can vaccinate us all from the hatred of the past.

Montford is currently a professor of art at the University of Rhode Island, Kingston; Hartford School of Art at the University of Hartford, Connecticut; and Columbia University Teachers College, New York. His confrontational, conceptual installations have provoked controversy and discussion in solo exhibitions at the Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford; The Kitchen, New York City; the DeCordova Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts; and the Museum of the National Center of African-American Artists, Boston.

Montford holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, and a Bachelor of Arts from Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts.

He will speak on the "Artist Dollars Project" at the Members' Preview, Thursday, February 3, 1994, 6:30 p.m. A reception for the artist begins at 5:00 and ends at 8:30 p.m. Reservations are required and can be made by calling the Museum at 513/241-0343.



James Montford.

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